



1-5 Cav and 425th Civil Affairs Soldiers celebrate the completion of renovations to Najid Primary School in Baghdad.

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Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 206th Field Artillery Regiment find ways to keep hydrated in the summer heat.

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# Cav Country

Volume 1, Issue 9

"Telling the First Team's Story"

August 20, 2004

## Foot Patrols Common for Tankers in Iraq

By Pfc. Erik LeDrew  
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD-- In an urban landscape like Baghdad, a place peppered with a variety of cars, buildings, people, and animals under the ever-present sheen of neon lighting, the tracked monster that is an M1A2 Abrams tank doesn't make for the most inconspicuous or mobile of vehicles.

So when the tankers of White Platoon, "Cobra" Company of the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team (BCT), left the gates of Camp Cuervo the night of

July 29 to patrol their sector in north-eastern Baghdad, they decidedly left their Abrams' behind them.

Instead, White Platoon rolled-out in it's more mobile, but still quite noticeable up-armored Humvees. It wasn't long however, before they came to a stop, parked the vehicles, and threw open their doors to begin part of its patrol that is usually left to the Infantry: the foot patrol.

"Sometimes I'd rather be in a tank because it feels so much safer," Pvt. Wilbert Parks, 2-8 Cav. said. "But on days where

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By Pfc. Erik LeDrew, 122nd MPAD

1st Lt. Travis Trammell, platoon leader, White Platoon, Cobra Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, reaches out to shake the hand of an Iraqi boy, while pausing for a moment during his unit's foot patrol down "Restaurant Road" July 29.

## Al Rashid Search Nets Six Anti-Iraqi Insurgents

By Cpl. Bill Putnam  
122nd MPAD

AL RASHID, Baghdad-- Soldiers from the 1st Cavalry Division's 5th Brigade Combat Team and the Iraqi National Guard's 304th Battalion detained six suspected anti-Iraqi forces during a massive cordon-and-search recently in southern Baghdad.

The search was part of the division's mission to target the outskirts of Baghdad where rockets are fired into the International Zone, said Maj. Cameron Leiker, the operations chief for 1st Battalion 8th Cavalry Regiment.

The operation was designed to find anti-Iraqi forces and weapons caches in one of the most active areas of the brigade's area of responsibility, Leiker said.

Units from the 1st Battalion, 21st Field Artillery Regiment, cordoned off roads leading to the area, while 1-8 Cav., and the ING's 304th Battalion searched the area.

The division's Rapid Reaction Force air-assaulted from UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters onto an island in the Tigris to look for weapons caches.

Military working-dog teams searched for caches. If any were



By Cpl. Bill Putnam, 122nd MPAD

Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Mallo, a platoon sergeant in Company D, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, and two infantrymen from the Iraqi National Guard's 304th Battalion, look at photos belonging to a suspected insurgent during an operation in the Al Rashid District.

found, engineer assets were on hand to dig them up. Civil Affairs specialists, from Company A, 489th CA Battalion talked with the locals about projects the coalition will be doing for the area.

The ING Soldiers did most of the searching, Leiker said. "It was a very large organization going out into these areas," he said.

Delta Company's mortar platoon found two insurgents, who

happened to be brothers, at their homes next door to each other along the river during the early morning operation.

Everything started off with a search and a knock, including the target homes, Leiker said.

"By doing it that way, we come across in a more positive, less threatening manner," he said

of the search's techniques.

There at the mortar platoon's target homes, Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Mallo, the platoon sergeant for Delta Company's mortar platoon, waited for the family to open the gate door. Once open, his Soldiers and attached ING troops flooded in to look for their target. Eventually two men were questioned.

"Is this you?" Mallo asked a man wearing a white "man dress." He held up a photo of the man. Arrogance and nervousness flashed across the man's face.

"Yes," the man finally said. An Iraqi Soldier led him out, handcuffed him and put him on a truck.

"We didn't want to do that in front of his kids," the sergeant said. All the insurgents captured that day would later be questioned. The other two men the platoon wanted weren't home, Mallo said.

Mallo and his unit handed out fliers to the locals asking for help identifying insurgents and for the locations of other caches.

After searching the target homes, Mallo and his platoon began the tough task of searching farm fields and jungle-like palm groves for caches.

"See that burlap bag? If you

see another, pull at it. Something could be hidden under there," Mallo said. He was advising the ING troops on how to look for hidden weapons caches. Sunlight barely peaked through the dense vegetation.

The Soldiers wearily spread back out in a line to continue searching through a palm grove. Crashes and the rustles of the dense vegetations echoed through the grove.

By the time they were done, uniforms were covered in tiny thistles and smeared green from falling.

It was exhausting, the heat started to affect everyone. Eventually two ING Soldiers with Mallo's platoon fell victim heat exhaustion. One had to be evacuated.

Given the area's past, cracking the insurgency there has been hard, Leiker noted. Years ago, the now-deposed leader gave five-acre parcels of land there to friends, family, a few military generals and Ba'ath Party leaders. As a result, many of the area residents are fervently pro-Saddam, Leiker said.

"Being able to break in (to the area) is a bit difficult, because there's a lot of loyalty there," Leiker said.

## Changing Times will also Mean Changing Attitudes

By Master Sgt. Dave Larsen  
1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD-- The city streets are becoming more and more congested. A coalition initiative recently funded another new gas station in central Baghdad. Commerce is picking up, and more and more Iraqis are jumping into their cars to get to and from work.

With these changes, Baghdad is beginning to resemble what it is: a major metropolitan area with more than five million residents, and the commercial capital of the country. The changeover to Iraqi sovereignty marked another significant change for Task Force Baghdad Soldiers serving in the capital city - they no longer own the streets of Baghdad. Safe driving practices are not only expected, they need to be enforced.

Staff Sgt. Tim Gray is the non-commissioned officer in charge of the personal security detail that guards the 1st Cavalry Division's chief of civil military affairs. He spends a lot of time on the road, getting his boss to and from meetings with officials of the new Iraqi transitional government. Driving safely saves more than Iraqi lives, he said.

"Soldiers have been put in the hospital due to other Soldiers' bad driving," Gray said. "Someone is going to be killed."

Common practices of forcing civilian vehicles off the roadways that impeded convoys in the past are no longer acceptable behavior in this changing environment.

"What good is it going to do to run them off the road when they're just going to work, or taking their kids to school?" Gray asked. "Risks are far greater than benefits for driving like that."

Interest in how Soldiers relate and inter-

act with the local populace begins at the top of the command structure of the First Team.

"It must be clear to the Iraqi people that we view our duty here as providing a link to the promise of this country," said Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli, commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division. "One significant way we can achieve that sign of recognition is to quickly and noticeably alter our behavior toward the citizenry."

Chiarelli said that showing respect to Iraqis, whether on foot patrol, in a convoy or when engaging their leaders has a direct bearing on the future success of the First Team's mission in Baghdad.

"Iraq belongs to Iraqis, and soon its citizens will begin to share in the dreams of representative government and full freedoms that have been denied so long," Chiarelli said. "Respect Iraqis as you would your neighbors at home."

The biggest thing civil military affairs specialists are stressing is that the attitudes of First Team troopers should change with the times. Soldiers need to remember that they are now ambassadors of the United States, in a sovereign nation.

"We should speak and act in a way that will bring honor to our nation," said Sgt. 1st Class Warner Stadler, a division civil military affairs liaison officer. "We should never allow the frustrations of our day-to-day struggles with the insurgents to be reflected in our attitude toward the Iraqi people."

Applying an attitude adjustment will also help Soldiers on the busy city streets of the Iraqi capital.

"People should drive just like they're in their hometown," Gray said. "How would they like it (back home) if people were driving like they always had the right of way?"

## Arab Strength Centers Around Family

SFC Warner Stadler  
G5 LNO

*"I and my brothers against my cousins; I and my cousins against the stranger." - - - Arabic Proverb*

Although this proverb comments on loyalties, it reveals the importance of the extended family structure in the Arab society. The family (or clan) is the foundation of an Arab's social and political activity. Strong family ties offer security to an individual, but they also require strong commitments, obligations and loyalties.

This sense of commitment to family is often stronger than the sense of obligation to follow the rule of law of the state. One does therefore not have to be a scientist to figure out that the loyalty to family is typically stronger than loyalty to the government or even the Coalition Forces.

If we kill or insult an Iraqi's brother, cousin or other member of his extended family, he will find himself obligated to seek revenge. He believes that his reputation and family honor will not be restored, until he has killed the offenders or other members of their "clan". Only if the killing was accidental, will he consider accepting a settlement and refrain from retaliating.

In order to keep from having to fight more and more Iraqis, and all their brothers and cousins, we have to be cognizant of the structure of an Arab's family, as well as its significance. The senior male member of the family has the undisputed authority to make decisions on behalf of the entire family. Other family members do not argue with him or speak loudly in his presence, especially not in public. Wives are expect-

ed to obey and serve their husbands. Traditionally, they will allow their husbands to speak for them in public. Mothers raise the children, especially in the early years. The father acts as the disciplinarian and the authoritarian figure. He concerns himself mostly with the upbringing of his sons. The mothers generally deal with the upbringing of daughters. Children are raised to conform to the norms and rules of the Arab society. They are strongly discouraged from seeking individuality. Because chastity of women is a symbol of the family's honor, daughters do not move out of the home until they are given away to marriage. It is imperative then, that Coalition Force soldiers treat Iraqi women with the utmost respect to protect and preserve their honor and dignity.

When we interact with an Arab family, be it at a checkpoint, a cordon and search or a social gathering, we have to be sensitive to the Arab's sense of family values. First we should always show respect to the head of the household, by addressing him first, and not address any women folk without his consent. If at all possible, we should avoid causing him to lose face in front of his family. If we have to arrest him, we must not take him down in plain view of his family. Otherwise, his children will never forget, and they may be seeking to fight your children tomorrow. The golden rule says: "Treat others the way you want to be treated." Therefore - treat Iraqi families the way you would want your family to be treated.

*Note: You can find chain-teach packages for cultural awareness training, cordon and search procedures and (social) engagement patrols on the 1CD Tac Web in the G5 shared files.*

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## Spur & The Moment

Photos by Pfc. Al Barrus, 122nd MPAD

### "What advice would you give to Soldiers coming to Iraq?"

"Give everybody your address and ask them to send lots of food"



2nd Lt. Ryan Corker  
1-8 Cav.

"Be prepared to deal with things while you're here. If you need something don't be afraid ask someone to send it to you from home and don't get frustrated."



Staff Sgt. Yolanda Chaney  
E Co. 13th Signal

"Prepare to play real army. This is the real deal over here. It's not NTC, it's not a training event. This is real war. Be ready, be prepared and be trained."



1st Sgt. Clay Young  
68th Chemical Co.

"It can get pretty boring out here so bring lots of forms of entertainment."



Pfc. Angela Scherrer  
515th FSB

"Get into a good PT program. Find out what your program is going to be like and adjust to the heat. Get into a good rhythm."



Spc. Steven Vargas  
B Co. 101st MI Bn

"Listen to your NCOs and officers. You're going to need all of the help you can get."



Sgt. Marcos Morales  
HHC 1-8 Cav.



# Red Team Responds to Explosion at Church

By Cpl. Bill Putnam  
122nd MPAD

AL RASHID, Baghdad--Soldiers from the 1st Cavalry Division's 5th Brigade Combat Team, based at nearby Camp Ferrin-Huggins, were some of the first to arrive at a Catholic church after it was hit by two car bombs just after evening services.

Four other car bombs, three in Baghdad and one in Mosul, exploded at Christian churches around Iraq. The death toll has been estimated at 11 dead and 46 wounded from all five bombings. No accurate casualty toll was available for the Al Rashid bombing.

When Staff Sgt. Dennis Saxton arrived at the St. Peters Seminary and Catholic Church Aug. 1, the scene around him was one word: chaos.

Two car bombs exploded in the church's parking lot only minutes before he arrived. People were running into the lot filled with the still-burning remnants of worshiper's cars to look for survivors or remains. Iraqi police were trying to control the ever-growing crowd; they eventually resorted to firing into the air. Smoke was everywhere.

Saxton, a member of 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment's governance team, was one of the first Soldiers to arrive on the site.

"It was hectic," Saxton recalled.

Col. Stephen Lanza, the 5th BCT commander arrived shortly after Saxton's group. He echoed Saxton's description of the scene: chaos.

"It was like a circus gone mad," he said. The IP were firing shots into the air to control the mob of people trying to enter the lot. People were yelling or screaming; the cars were on fire.

The IP chief for Al Rashid, the 5th BCT's area of operations, asked for help.

"How could I say no?" Lanza said.

More and more units, both U.S. and IP showed up to secure the site. One of the first was a Quick Reaction Force from Battery A, 1st Battalion, 21st Field Artillery Regiment. Then another QRF from 1-8 Cav arrived.

Within an hour, M1-A1 Abrams tanks sat at intersections around the church in case insurgents came back for a second go around on the church.

Eventually Soldiers from 1-8 Cav and Iraqi Police would surround the area, providing security and crowd control, said Maj. Cameron Leiker, the operations chief for the armor battalion and the on-site commander.

An Explosive Ordnance Disposal team arrived to scour the site for left-over explosives



By Cpl. Bill Putnam, 122nd MPAD

A British investigator with a joint US-British bomb investigation team pores over wreckage from a car bombing at a Christian church in Al Rashid Aug. 1.

and figure out the particulars of the explosion.

Equipped with flashlights, the two EOD techs determined two car bombs of varying sizes exploded at the church. The large one blew up inside the lot; a smaller one exploded outside, the techs told Leiker.

Both bombs, the EOD tech explained, were meant to be fire-bombs. The parking lot, filled with cars, was torched immediately. Cars burnt and melted into the pavement. Two small buildings were damaged from flying

debris. The concussion and part of the car bomb itself brought down a section of the wall surrounding the lot. Even the lot's gate was knocked off it's track.

What Lieker recalled about the lot was the fog. A strong, pungent fog from the burning cars filled the air. Breathing was difficult.

Hours after the bombings, debris from the explosion littered the ground. Glass and parts of cars covered the ground. An Iraqi fire truck hosed down the cars. The steam from the still hot cars

mixed in with the smoke. Everyone walked around the site gingerly; human remains were possibly scattered around the site.

Eventually a set of spot lights arrived. They cast an eerie green, fluorescent on the burnt cars. A joint U.S.-British investigative team looked through the wreckage and arrived at the EOD tech's conclusion.

What isn't known is why or who did it. An investigation is being conducted into all the car bombings, Leiker said.

## Beware of Sexually Transmitted Diseases, even in a Combat Zone

By Michelle Newbold  
1st Cavalry Division  
Public Affairs

CAMP VICTORY NORTH, Baghdad-- "I think it's important for Soldiers to realize that there are significant consequences with regards to engaging in any kind of casual sex," said Lt. Col. Roberto Nang, Division Surgeon, for the 1st Cavalry Division. Unfortunately, many Soldiers don't think about the consequences, and end up with a sexually transmitted disease, (STD), or an unplanned pregnancy.

Many STDs are difficult to detect. Some do not show immediate symptoms to the infected. "There's a lot of asymptomatic cases," Nang said. "So people could be car-

rying the disease, male and female, and they don't know that they have it." If they don't know they have the disease, they can't be treated, and the infections can cause very serious damage. "For males it could affect the prostate, females, it could possibly affect their fallopian tubes."

Some STDs, are incurable, they never go away. "Some of them you really can't treat," Nang said. "We can [only] minimize the symptoms."

One of the most common STDs is chlamydia. The symptoms can show up from a week to 21 days after having sex. In men, the symptoms include a watery, white or yellow drip from the penis, and burning during urination. In women, symptoms include discharge from the vagina, bleeding

between periods, and pain in the abdomen, sometimes with fever or nausea. It is even possible for a mother to pass chlamydia to her baby. Most women, and some men don't even have any symptoms. The disease, if not treated, can lead to infertility.

Gonorrhea is another STD that may not have symptoms. Gonorrhea can cause reproductive organ damage, heart trouble, skin disease, arthritis and blindness, if not treated. In males, the symptoms include a thick yellow or white drip from the penis, burning or pain during urination or bowel movement and frequent urination. In women, symptoms include a thick yellow or white discharge from vagina, bleeding between periods and cramps and pain in

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## Cobras, ING Soldiers Conduct Foot Patrol

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it's hot like today, being inside of a tank is like being in an oven, so I'd definitely rather be outside, walking around."

Despite his training as a tanker, Parks has not conducted a single patrol in a tank since he arrived in Baghdad.

Parks, who has been in Iraq since the end of March, said his platoon is either driving around in humvees, or doing dismounted patrols on foot, "doing the Infantry thing."

On this particular night the White Platoon patrolled a place affectionately referred to as "Restaurant Road," a kilometer-long stretch of road where many Iraqis congregate due to the high-concentration of shops, eateries, nightclubs and restaurants.

1st Lt. Travis Tramell, platoon leader for 2-8 Cav. said the main purpose for conducting the dismounted patrol down Restaurant Road was to give face-time to White Platoon's cohorts: approximately a dozen Iraqi National Guard (ING) soldiers of Company C, 305th ING Battalion.

"These ING usually get a really positive response when we walk around down here," Tramell said. "Letting the ING soldiers take the lead on patrol while we hang back really gives the Iraqis a feeling that their own people are taking back the control of their country."

After completing their patrol, the Soldiers of White Platoon mounted up once again in their humvees and prepared for another night of patrolling both on and off foot, sans tank.

## 2-8 Tankers Use 'Scare' Tactics to Curb IEDs

By Pfc. Erik LeDrew  
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD-- Improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are one of the most common causes of U.S. Army casualties in Baghdad. They consist of anything from a 60mm mortar hot-wired to a detonation device several meters away to TNT packed into a container. There can be only one massive explosive, or many small ones, daisy-chained together to take out an entire convoy. Either way, the presence of IEDs is a danger to both the targeted troops and any unfortunate bystanders.

Lately however, the volume of IED-related incidents has been steadily dropping in northeastern Baghdad, due largely to the high-frequency IED sweeps and presence patrols by Soldiers such as the tankers of Bronze Platoon, "Cobra" Company C, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team.

On a recent IED sweep, an M1A2 Abrams tank and a Bradley Armored Fighting Vehicle covered more than 25 kilometers of roadway, searching routes and two major thoroughfares running through 2-8 Cav.'s sector, for any sign of

IEDs or people trying to place them.

"This is the time when [the insurgents] like to set up IEDs along the roads because nobody's out and it's so quiet," said Sgt. Jason Folmar, a tanker with 2-8 Cav.

"So this is an excellent time for us to catch them in the act or at least scare them off," the White Oak, Texas native said.

The Abrams led the way, hugging the right side of the road, while the Bradley stayed roughly a dozen meters to the rear, hugging the left side of the road.

"Most IED sweeps are really uneventful," Folmar said. "We just crawl along the side of the road, while I sit there in the tank, and scan up ahead using the night-vision or the thermals [on the tank], and try to stay focused on doing the job."

Meanwhile, the tank commander, Staff Sgt. John Fernandez, 2-8 Cav., spent his time scanning the side of the road with a spotlight, discerning whether or not the occasional piles of trash heaped on the roadside had wires coming out of them, wires being a telltale sign of an IED.

The tankers concluded their IED sweep after two hours, before segueing into a brief presence-patrol, a patrol intended to make their presence known and to hopefully discourage any would-be insurgents.

The entire patrol ultimately ended without incident at approximately 5 a.m., after finding neither an IED nor any suspicious persons.

Folmar said going out on IED patrols in a tank affords them several advantages they wouldn't otherwise have.

**"We're not invincible, but we definitely have an air of confidence riding around in a tank."**

*-Sgt. Jason Folmar,  
C Co., 2-8 Cav., 1st BCT*



By Pfc. Erik LeDrew, 122nd MPAD

Staff Sgt. John Fernandez, a tanker with Bronze Platoon, Cobra Co., 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division and an Elizaveth, N.J. native, uses a hand-held spotlight to scan the roadside for improvised explosive devices (IEDs) while standing in the tank commander's hatch on an M1A2 Abrams tank during an IED sweep July 31.

"Humvees just get chewed up by [rocket propelled grenades] and IEDs, but tanks can take a lot more than that," he said. "We've got 70 tons of armor to protect us."

In addition to that, because of the amount of noise generated by an Abrams and the daunting size of it, the tankers are able to make use of what Folmar refers to as scare tactics.

"You can hear a tank from really far away, especially at night," he said. "If some guy hears us coming while he's trying to set-up an IED, he's most likely going to just stop what he's doing and run. The proper word for that is deterrent, but we call it scare tactics because

that's what we do: we scare them off."

Despite the gross amount of armor and the "scare" factor offered by an Abrams, the Bronze tankers realize that all it could take is an explosive put in the right place.

"We've got much more protection than lighter-skinned vehicles, but enough firepower could destroy anything," Folmar said.

However, the Abrams is still the ideal vehicle for the job, and the Bronze platoon tankers couldn't feel better about riding in one Folmar said.

"We're not invincible, but we definitely have an air of confidence riding around in a tank," Folmar said.

## Operation Cobra Sweep Cleans up Abandoned Apartments

By Pfc. Erik LeDrew  
122nd MPAD

HAY MUTHANA DISTRICT, Baghdad-- A cordon and search operation of apartment buildings suspected of containing explosive materials took place in Baghdad's Hay Muthana district. In the last three weeks, more than four large improvised explosive devices were detonated near a traffic circle in the district, which led to the suspicions.

Operation Cobra Sweep was a joint effort involving Iraqi Policemen, (IPs), from the Muthana IP station, Iraqi National Guardsmen, (ING), and Soldiers from Company C, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, of the 1st Brigade

Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

"Our intent was to find IED makers, IED materials and possible storage places for IEDs in an area that is in very close proximity to an IED-laden area," said Capt. Steven Gventer, officer-in-charge of the operation and Company C commander.

After the Cobra troopers and ING soldiers secured the cordon surrounding the eight-building complex, the IP trucks rolled in with lights flashing.

"Everything happened simultaneously," Gventer said. "We secured the area while the IPs searched three to four buildings at a time."

Although there were traces of explosives in a few rooms,



By Pfc. Erik LeDrew, 122nd MPAD

Capt. Steven Gventer, Company C, commander, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, has the commander of the Iraqi National Guard (right) translate his instructions to Iraqi Police officers (left) during Operation Cobra Sweep. Ultimately nothing was found except for a few firearms.

Despite the no-show of IED contraband, the operation was still an excellent demon-

stration of coordination, Gventer said, because of the massive logistics involved in coordinating it.

"In addition to coordinat-

ing with the immediate IPs and ING Soldiers, we also had both an American and an Iraqi [explosive ordnance disposal] team standing by in case we found any explosives."

"On top of that, we had to get permission to work in that area, since it falls just outside my unit's patrol-zone, in the 39th Brigade Combat Team's sector," he said. "Truthfully, it went much smoother than I had anticipated."

There were no shots fired and no injuries, Gventer said. The IPs and ING units cleared the buildings in less than two and a half hours.

"These buildings are clear for the time being," Gventer said. "So we can focus our energies elsewhere for now."



## Back to School: Najid Renovation Complete

By Sgt. Dan Purcell  
122nd MPAD

KERNABAT DISTRICT, Baghdad-- Najid primary school was once a wrecked and dilapidated shell of its former self. But now with the new school year only months away, the school celebrated its recent restoration with local students, teachers and the people who helped make it happen.

Marking the completion of the school's renovation, the students' in attendance received gifts provided by the 425th Civil Affairs Battalion. Soldiers of Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, and Iraqi National Guardsmen intermingled with the children and provided a secure environment July 28.

The school was in bad shape before the project started.

"When I did the initial assessment of the school it was completely trashed. There were big holes in the walls, broken windows, major electrical problems and a big pool of standing water," said Spc. Sharla Tracy, project coordinator, 425th CA. "It looked like a dump yard with piles of trash and old desks."

"We then hired a local Iraqi contractor, Dr. Karim Alwari. Our purpose was to restore the school to its original look, to



By Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

Sgt. Jung Park, 425th Civil Affairs Battalion, gives out candy to some students who attended a celebration marking the completion of renovations to Najid primary school in the Kernabat district of Baghdad.

include things like new faucets for drinking water, a fence and fresh paint," she said.

"This school is the first one we initiated, so what we wanted to do was set a standard on how schools should look," Sgt. Malcolm Flanders, 425th CA, said. "Dr. Karim did an exceptional job. His bids are always low to moderate, and he always puts in way more effort into what he does."

Local contractors did all the work on

the renovation, which is one of the project's several good points because it helps to stimulate the local economy, Tracy said. It was a 45-day project that was started in mid-June and was completed at a cost \$65,000.

"Before we started work on the school it was horrible, it wasn't fit for human beings," Alwari said. "There was water everywhere and the toilets were so bad you

couldn't even look at them. To see it, you would say just leave it and build something new."

To get the job done, Alwari hired 30 employees including some who were handicapped.

"It's good for our economy to hire locally because it is better to give our people something to do and pay them than just handing them money," Alwari said. "We repaired the roof, walls and windows. We put in septic tanks, updated the electrical system and painted the building."

The school is located in the Kernabat District, northwest Baghdad. It consists of 12 classrooms and employs 20 teachers who are responsible for approximately 800 students. Half of the students will attend a four-hour session in the morning and the other half in the afternoon.

"The renovation was the last of our bigger projects. Since the transfer of authority, most of the funding is being handled by the various Iraqi government agencies. So, now we are concentrating on low budget projects like trash clean up and preventative medicine," Tracy said.

"I enjoy helping the children and it seems everyone is happy with the results, even the headmistress, usually they always find something wrong," Karim said.

"The kids here are really amazing...No matter what the conditions are, they are always smiling," Tracy said.

## Local Orphanage Gets a Helping Hand

By Sgt. Dan Purcell  
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD-- Transcending the daily fare of security patrols and battery support, Soldiers of Battery A, 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division broke from routine to lend a hand to some very special children.

Rolling up in front of the Dina Institute, an orphanage located in the Qadisiyah neighborhood of the Mansour District, the Soldiers brought both a truck and their willingness to help move the institute's furniture to its new home.

Capt. Evans Hanson, 3-82 FA civil military operations officer said the move was the culmination of a joint effort between the Iraqi government and the Multi-National Forces to find a new home for 60 special-needs children who had been overlooked since the war.

"In late April the [Neighborhood Advisory Council] mentioned that there was an orphanage in our area of operation that had been overlooked, as far as support, by the government," Hanson said. "When we first saw their living conditions, which were very poor and unsanitary...we immediately got them a \$3,000 grant through the Commander's Emergency Relief Program [CERP]."

Hanson said they spent the money on blankets, beds and food. They were also able to pay the back-rent on the facility. The battery also brought in food,

which they could use as a stable source of nutrition over the next few months Hanson said.

Knowing that the money would only provide a temporary fix to a long-term problem, Hanson met with the Iraqi Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the NAC to find a permanent solution to the institute's problems.

"The ministry then sent in a representative, who along with Mr. Najishakir [NAC member], myself, the institute director and the battalion commander sat down and talked about the future of the orphanage," Hanson said. "Together, we came up with two options. One, they could become a public school and get subsidized support from the Iraqi government; or two, they could stay a private school and the government would do the best it could to get non-governmental [NGO] support."

Since that meeting, the institute decided to remain a private school so it could raise its own tuition even though half of the kids had been abandoned by their parents and the director has taken care of them without charge. The directors wanted the institute to remain private so that they could manage the school the way they saw fit, Hanson said.

1st Lt. James Williamson, Battery A, 3-82 FA, executive officer, said the Dina Institute is named after the daughter of the headmistress, Um-Dina, and the great thing about the project was how supportive the NAC was in coordi-

nating the effort to get the children moved.

"The only thing they have asked for is an extra truck to move the big pieces of furniture," Williamson said. "They arranged for the Iraqi movers and a smaller truck, so we were just in the background offering a little extra assistance. Since the transition of authority, the [NAC] has taken over big time, especially taking care of these special-needs children."

Williamson said what Um-Dina, the headmistress, is doing is amazing.

"She has taken very good care of these children since the war with very little help," he said. "We are really happy to help her, and since we have gotten the word out to the people, the neighborhood has been very supportive by helping her with anything she needs."

Hanson thinks projects like this show people that things are improving and that the Iraqi people are doing it on their own.

"Our part in this is only that of a facilitator, and it's a very small part compared to what the Iraqis are doing for themselves," Hanson said.

As for the Soldiers of Battery A, helping out was an opportunity to participate in one more aspect of their deployment.

"We don't usually do stuff like this," Sgt. Matthew Lowry, Battery A, 3-82 FA, said. "But, I think it was good for all of us to be able to come out here and help these children out."



By Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

SPC Brent Armstrong, Alpha Battery, 3rd Battalion 82nd Field Artillery Regiment helps a couple of Iraqi movers unload furniture at the Dina Institute's new home. The 3rd Battalion 82nd Field Artillery Regiment was responsible for helping some special-needs orphans move their furniture to a new home provided by the Iraqi government.

## Cav. Installs Sewer Pipes, Paves Roads

By Spc. Jan Critchfield  
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD-- When the 1st Cavalry Division arrived, Al-Wahda had almost exclusively dirt roads and an ancient, collapsing sewer system. The division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team has been working since March to improve what they consider essential services, like sewage and roadways. A ceremony marking the completion of a main sewer line and road pavement project in the Al-Wahda neighborhood of the Karadah district took place recently.

This latest project is part of a larger scheme to improve the Karadah district's sewer system by connecting it to the rest of the city and eventually laying pipe that will serve individual buildings.

"All of Karadah's sewage now flows to a wastewater treatment plant completed about a month ago," said Lt. Col. Brian Dosa, commander of 8th ENG, 3 BCT. "The most important part of a sewer project ... you can't

see [it], it's all under the ground. But under the ground there are some very large pipes that are taking the sewage from all of Karadah out to the Baghdad mainline, and ultimately to a wastewater treatment plant."

Part of the project was also to improve the routing of excess runoff, which caused areas in Al-Wahda to flood with raw sewage when it rained.

"The area is flat, so wherever there's low ground, you're going to see flooding in a major way," said Capt. Brad Morgan, an 8th ENG construction officer who helped coordinate the project.

The project was started June 10 and cost \$97,000 of Commander's Emergency Relief Program (CERP) funds, a pool of money consisting of funds recovered from the former Iraqi regime and funds allocated to the 8th Engineers by the United States Congress.

"The sewer situation here is better than in the past," said Ismail Khalil, current chairman of the Al-Wahda Neighborhood

Council, through a translator.

"This is a very important project for the people here," he said. "As you can see now, no trash, no smell, and the area is clean."

"We appreciate [the Multi-National Forces] because [they] supported the council," Khalil said. "There is good cooperation between Multi-National Forces and the new government. We hope that the people [of Iraq] will feel very good, because the people suffer too much from the former regime, and with the Coalition we hope that the future will be brighter."

With seasonal flooding of raw sewage making the Al-Wahda neighborhood of Baghdad an unpleasant place to walk, the Multi-National Forces answered the request of the Al-Wahda Neighborhood Council to improve the situation by installing storm drains (right), pavement to aid in directing runoff, and by replacing the main sewage line that serves the neighborhood.



By Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

### A Medic's Care...



By Sgt. John Queen, 3rd BCT Public Affairs

While on a mission with 1st Cavalry Division's Troop F, 9th Cavalry in southern Baghdad, Cpl. Miriam Garcia, a combat medical specialist assigned to Company E, 215th Forward Support Battalion, entertains a young Iraqi boy in hopes of gaining his trust so she can take his vital signs.

## Cav. Starts Construction on Karadah Pump Station

By Spc. Jan Critchfield  
122nd MPAD

KARADAH DISTRICT, Baghdad-- Ceremonies marking the start of construction on a Karadah district pumping station took place recently.

Originally built to pump rainwater, the station has been handling whatever gets fed to it from other areas of Baghdad-- mostly raw sewage.

"This is a pump station that very badly needs to be rehabilitated," said Lt. Col. Brian Dosa, commander of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team's 8th Engineer Battalion. "Two of the pumps have not been working for a long time."

Recently, the last of three pumps installed in the station gave out, flooding the neighborhood with noxious wastewater, up to two-feet deep in some areas.

Local community leaders addressed the issue at a weekly meeting, telling an 8th Engineer Battalion representa-

tive that fixing the problem is a top priority.

"A wall is going to be built, expanding the area around the pump station. There will be a house for the operator and his family to live in, structural repairs to the pump house itself, [and] mechanical work. We're going to redo the circuitry and make sure the electrical system works well," Dosa said.

When the renovations are done later this year, they're expected to cost \$174,785 of Commander's Emergency Relief Funds recovered from the former Iraqi regime.

"Working together with Baghdad's municipalities, we're able to help with the funding and oversight, and selecting the contractors," Dosa said.

"This project is just one of many examples of the municipalities, together with multinational forces, are working to improve the quality of life for the people of Iraq."



# Abu Nuwas

August 20, 2004

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## Soldiers Work to Clean up Park; Rebuild Dream

By Staff Sgt. Rebekah-mae Bruns  
39th BCT Public Affairs

ABU NUWAS, Baghdad--Swiftly moving down the bank of the biblically-famed Tigris River, 1st Lt. Brian Mason, of Jonesboro, Ark., yells out to a group of surrounding Soldiers trying to keep pace with his fast walk.

"This fence needs to go," he said pointing to a rusted fence line with trees and shrubbery twining through its links. "And when you're tearing out the fence, try to leave the trees."

Mason curtly gives his guidelines for what he wants done.

"Make it look pretty," he said. "This one's real important."

A short time later, dirt clouds and the sounds of heavy machinery fill the afternoon air. Bulldozers, bucket-loaders and chainsaws rumble to and fro, wildly setting to work on Mason's directives.

The instructions Mason gave his platoon of engineers from the 39th Brigade Combat Team (BCT) are for a clean-up project on a once-prominent park that lays along the



By Rebekah-Mae Bruns, 39th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

A statue of Abu Nuwas sits as bucket loaders empty trash into waiting dump trucks. The park is the epicenter for a clean up and renovation project that will hopefully restore Baghdad's culturally rich downtown.

historical waters of Baghdad.

### Dreaming in Iraq

The renovation of the park has long been a dream of the Iraqi people. It began in 1979 when plans were drawn up for a garden and cultural museum that would sit on a man-made island in the Tigris River. But Saddam's government never completed the design nor the development.

In 1981, the mayor of Baghdad commissioned a design for the park again, but this time the plans called for a riverfront park, elaborate gardens, and urban recreational activities involving performing arts. The design also integrated a national library and a variety of art institutes that would have made it the cultural epicenter for Iraq.

The cost of the proposed project was \$7 billion. The dream never came to fruition.

### Old Dream, New Era

More than 25 years after the park's initial plans, a tall American general stands determined to restore the park to its original splendor.

"Do you see what we could do down here?" asked Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli, commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division. "Three weeks ago those fish restaurants were closed and now they're open."

Chiarelli met with the recently elected mayor of Baghdad, Dr. Alaa Tamimi, to discuss needs for reconstruction in the city. Tamimi brought up the park.

"When the mayor mentioned it, it resonated," Chiarelli said. "I realized the importance of it. It's like any city that has a place that exemplifies the spirit of the city, some place like no where else, that is different from anything you've ever seen."

Tamimi quickly got to work and had fresh plans drawn up by a local team of Iraqi engineers. The latest design includes water fountains, art galleries, a river walk spanning over 3 kilometers, and the reopening of restaurants that once served fish caught from the Tigris River.

The neighborhood adjacent to the park was once filled with shops and specialty stores. Families from all around came to enjoy the creative atmosphere. But over the span of 30 years and three wars, the shops began to close. A previously enchanted and wistful, artistic vision was replaced by concertina wire-lined streets and tall, obtrusive, concrete barricades.

Enter USAID, a sub agency of the U.S. State Department for International Development. The agency, which implements a variety of economic recovery programs throughout the world, agreed to help teach local Iraqis how to procure small business loans through private banks to jump start the businesses around the park.

"Invite the banks down and bring [the USAID] here [to the park]," Chiarelli said, hoping to the ball rolling.

"Make it easy for them," he continued. "Stick benches out, invite them, hold classes here on how to start a business so that they don't have to travel, peddle it up and down the street guys and make it easy for them to get this started."

A short distance away, seven 20-ton dump trucks rumbled off carrying full loads of trash and underbrush.

"Am I crazy here guys?" said Chiarelli throwing his hands up in reference to the park. "Because if I'm crazy, someone please tell me."

A few mumbled "nos" came

from the small crowd of men.

"That's the problem; no one wants to tell a two star general he's crazy," Chiarelli said smiling as he threw his arm around his project manager Lt. Col. Daniel Hendrickson of the Oregon based 2nd Battalion 162nd Infantry.

### The Tipping Point

Chiarelli isn't crazy but he is inspired.

The idea for the park, as Chiarelli puts it, belongs to the Iraqi people. Subsequently, the design and the actual renovation are also of the Iraqi people. But the Multi-National Forces are backing the high profiled venture with troop labor, for the initial clean up, and with appropriated funds from the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP), which are set aside for projects such as this.

The project manager, Hendrickson, and Chiarelli both are adamant about the Iraqi people being the ones to breathe life into the long anticipated vision.

"This park is for the people of Baghdad," Hendrickson said. "So it needs to be built and designed, for and by them."

Chiarelli is taking a more social approach to the problems Iraq faces rather than a 'blazing guns tactic.' A book called *The Tipping Point*, by Malcolm Gladwell, moved the general to actively engage in what could be a defining role in Iraq's success.

A passage from the book read by Chiarelli, examines various social epidemics that surround cultures and how to change the environment in a positive manner, to affect the negative outbreak by starting one's own epidemic. The most notable example it gives is the significant drop in crime in New York City in the late 80s and early 90s when citizens made an effort to rid public spaces of graffiti and other symbols of lawlessness. The theory holds that these signs of disorder created an epidemic of crime and that cleaning up the environment would have an impact on reducing crime.

The theory worked.

Chiarelli and Hendrickson's goal is to infect the Baghdad population with hope and positive changes that will allow it's own epidemic to occur.

"The park is the epicenter," Hendrickson said. "If we can restore the park to a nice condition, then hopefully it will continue to spread onto Abu Nuwas street and then the next block."

Plans are already well under way by the mayor of Baghdad and the Multi-National Forces to help revitalize the Abu Nuwas business district to its former state. Chiarelli said it will give them hope that things can change.

### The Poet Who Inspired



Centered in the middle of the park is a statue of Abu Nuwas, the 9th century love poet who inspired the park years ago. Made from stone found in northern Iraq he sits astutely looking out over the area offering drink from his cup to anyone who might come.

According to critics, Nuwas was one of the greatest Arabic poets of all time. His work, centered mostly on erotic male love poems, included drinking songs and wistful prose on the celebration of love and wine. Nuwas wrote about the park and so it received his name.



# A Different Kind of Ammo.....

By 1st Lt. Chris Heathscott  
39th BCT Public Affairs

CAMP COOKE, Taji, Iraq-- Every day, the 39th Brigade's Civil Military Operations section works to make a positive difference in the lives of the Iraqi people, to help make them successful as a new nation.

Their efforts have resulted in reconstructed schools, hospitals, irrigation and sewage systems, along with recreational projects for the children, just to name a few of their contributions to the overall mission.

Every day, Soldiers with the 39th Brigade Combat Team drive past miles of trash that consume the landscape along Highway One in Taji, Iraq. The mission for this particular day, however, would lead the CMO team directly to the heart of this landfill to visit its inhabitants, some of the poorest people in the Middle East. The team was going in prepared for anything, and heavily armed with boxes of goodwill.

"We pass that site all the time during our convoys, but had never stopped there," 2nd Lt. Ferris Keller, a 39th Brigade Military Police Officer said. "Actually, we never noticed there were people who lived there."

Maj. Karen Ryan, a resident of Batesville, Ark., had noticed. Her team also now had the 'ammo' to make an impact. This 'ammo' was not a tool of destruction. It was clothing, shoes, vitamins, candy and many other items provided by people from the state of Arkansas.

"It comes from a variety of places," Ryan said. "Each Soldier in our section has contacts at home and they bring that to the table, and people have learned throughout the 39th that we are collecting and so they have stuff and just drop it off. It's just a conglomeration of stuff."

After seeing firsthand how the children of Iraq live, Capt. Jason Meharg, of Clarksville, Ark., told his family and friends what he had seen.

"They started just pouring stuff in,"

Maj. Gordon McCoy, of Forrest City, Ark., smiles big as he reaches in his bag to pull out more stuff for the kids. Sgt. Ray Stinnett, of Springhill, Ark., hands out gifts from the top of his humvee. The items were donated as a great show of support by various individuals, businesses and churches in Arkansas.

Meharg said. "We were able to get enough stuff that we could take out that one day and actually make an impact and not just give them a little bit here and there."

"The First Baptist Church of Clarksville has done an outstanding job," he said. "They have sent me more than anybody else has. Between them and my parents and my parents' church, I've gotten a lot of stuff," Meharg said.

The team packed it in their trucks and headed for the landfill to distribute the goods to the tenants of the dump. The Iraqi's first impression of the 39th Brigade Soldiers was not one of peace, however.

"We go in there and we jump out and we've got weapons, we're all wearing our Kevlar and flak vests, we're all wearing our black shades," Meharg said. "We don't look like people who are going to help. We look like warriors."

"At first they were a little apprehensive," Ryan said. "I mean here come eight Humvees, barreling in and normally they're a little frightened when they see that. But once we got out and started passing out the goods and interacting with them, then there were a lot of people that followed from stop to stop."

"I think people were terrified when they first [saw] us," said Maj. Gordon McCoy, "But the minute we handed out that first doll, it was on. It was game on."

McCoy, a reservist who works for the First National Bank of Eastern Arkansas in Forrest City when he's not in uniform, said his employer donated several items as well, when he heard how poor the children were living.

"After seeing some of the kids myself, you want to get involved,"

(Left) An Iraqi man stands in front of his home enjoying a lollipop given to him by the Soldiers of the 39th. The man watches as his children seek more gifts and goods from the Soldiers.

(Right) Military Police with the 39th Brigade Combat Team pull security near one of the homes inside the Taji Dump, as the brigade's Civil Military Operations team visits the residents of the home. The house, like dozens of others in the dump, is made from cans, mud and whatever else the people could find there to shelter their families.

(Below) Iraqi children laugh and play catch with a new baseball thrown by an interpreter (in the red shirt). Many of the children living in the dump did not have shoes to wear.



Photos by 1st Lt. Chris Heathscott, 39th BCT Public Affairs

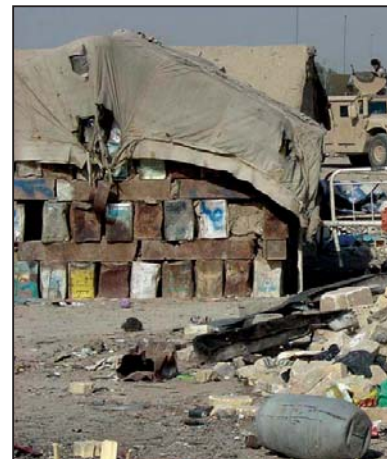


McCoy said. "When I had visited with my boss, he said he wanted to send some things."

And he did. Footballs, baseballs and baseball gloves, water guns and other items the children most likely didn't have.

"You should have seen the kids," McCoy said. "Man, your heart goes out. I tell you, your heart goes out to those kids."

"When you see a little girl there and she's the same age as your daughter at home...6, 7, 8 years old...and she's being told to walk through the dump, take a mule with her and go get water and bring it back...." Meharg said. "It just hit me hard. We're just visiting the dump for a day, not even a day, just a couple of hours, and we're going to come back to all these comforts we have around here. Those folks are going to





# .. For a Different Kind of Mission



have shoes.

"It makes you really appreciate what you have back home," Keller said. "It makes me wish my kids could see that to appreciate what they do have at home."

Some of Keller's team pulled security on the site, while the others helped pass out items to the crowd that began to gather once they realized the motives of the Soldiers were non-threatening. His team was also touched by the mission.

"We've done some stuff with the kids in downtown Baghdad, in the city," he said. "But we never actually looked at where they lived. Actually seeing people living in mud huts with cans as part of the structure of their houses...it's very humbling. It kind of makes you realize that everybody over here is not trying to kill you, and that there are some people over here that really need us over here to help them."

Aside from the clothes, shoes, vitamins and toys passed out, Ryan took instant pictures with a Polaroid Camera to hand to the kids as gifts.

"First they don't know what you're putting in front of your face, if it's a gun or...they don't know what the machine is," Ryan said. "But when they first figure out it's a picture and that gets circulated around, they all want one. For some of them, it's probably the first picture they've seen of themselves."

In order to show his appreciation, one Iraqi man approached the Soldiers as they prepared to depart, held out his hand and offered a sincere "thank you" in perfect English.

"Of all the meetings we've gone to...of all the coordinating we've done...doing stuff like that is a whole lot more worthwhile to me, because your directly impacting thier lives right now," Meharg said. "When we were driving off, kids were already taking those shirts that we gave them and were putting them on, so you know they were very excited about what little we gave them."

The convoy returned to Camp Cooke, with all participants feeling touched in some way by what they had experienced; an event that would not have taken place without the strong sup-



(Above) A young girl tries to follow a example of others by licking the lollipop given to her by 39th Brigade Soldiers. Apparently that was her first lollipop, because she didn't realize she had to take the wrapper off to actually eat the candy.

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stay there, and live there, and sleep there that night, and wake up the next day and spend the next day there. They are not going to leave the dump."

While visiting with one family in front of their home, which was built with paint cans and mud, a woman approached McCoy and pointed at her young child's foot. It had been cut open by a piece of glass according to an interpreter. McCoy quickly retrieved Ryan, who worked as a Registered Nurse prior to deploying.

"You can tell it was an old wound the way it was trying to heal," she said. "So we just treated him with... a beta-dine solution, and left the remainder for her to treat him. I think at one time it was infected, but not anymore."

The incident was a common occurrence, since many of the dozens of children who lived in the landfill did not



(Left) An Iraqi man stands by a wall built near his home in the dump. A 155-mm artillery casing found in the dump was used to construct part of the wall. Dozens of homes in the dump were made from anything from mud and straw to empty paint cans.



# Red Team

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August 20, 2004

## 1-8 Cav. Raid Brings in Four Suspects

By Pfc. Al Barrus  
122nd MPAD

AL RASHID, Baghdad-- Elements of Company B, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment and an attached platoon from 8th Engineer Battalion conducted a successful four-target simultaneous cordon and knock raid, detaining four suspected terrorists in four different homes in Al Doura.

Four of the intended six targets were allegedly involved in the killing of four Russians who worked at the Al Doura power plant in May, according to Capt. Jeff Mersiowsky, Company B commander.

"All four houses we hit contained personnel we were looking for, so we didn't have any dry holes," Mersiowsky said. "It's always a concern to go into a house and have to disrupt someone's life and realize you're in the wrong house."

An added success to the mission was the speed in which it was executed.

"We took about 30 minutes to search the house," said Staff Sgt. Michael Clay, 8th ENG team leader. "From the time we left to the time we came back was about 40 minutes."

"The quickness of the raid

was all done on purpose," Mersiowsky said. "The area we were going into was close to a mosque; I was thinking we would get some crowds on a Friday night. We already had plenty of intelligence. And we didn't find any significant weapons so we were able to expedite the operation."

The objectives and locations were developed when the company found information about a possible terrorist cell during a farm raid in Al Doura.

"In that cache the farmer was detained and he was the first person in the cell we found. After we got him, pieces of the cell started to unravel with information," Mersiowsky said. "We didn't realize how big the cell was until we got an informant."

With four more terrorists off the streets and one of them a possible leader to the cell, Company B has taken a big step forward to taking anti-Iraq force insurgents off the streets of Al Doura.

"Every time we pull someone out of there it makes a big difference here. The area has a lot of people who finance the activity," Mersiowsky said. "Whenever we can take out the leader, then it's difficult for the rest of the people to operate."



By Pfc. Al Barrus, 122nd MPAD

(Above) Soldiers maintain security during the search of an Al Doura home which yielded a suspected terrorist during the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 5th Brigade Combat Team operation.

(Right) Staff Sgt. Michael Clay (left) and Pfc. Sean Bastow of Company B, 8th Engineer Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, talk with an Iraqi man, checking paperwork while their fellow Soldiers search the home during a raid in Al Doura.



## First Team Soldiers Keep Al Rashid District Safe

By Cpl. Bill Putnam  
122nd MPAD

AL RASHID DISTRICT, Baghdad-- From rocket-propelled grenades to small arms fire, the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, sees all of it on their regular patrols through the Al Rashid District of Baghdad. Cavalry troopers from 1-7 Cav. have been running constant patrols on the highway from Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) through Al Rashid for well over a month now.

Keeping the strategic highway open is a critical mission, yet the days are long and hot for the troopers. The highway runs from BIAP and splits at one point. One section heads downtown, the other through the squadron's and the 5th Brigade Combat Team's area of Al Rashid.

"Something always goes 'boom' when we're going back to the camp," Spc. Joshua Breeding, a cavalry scout in Troop C, 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, said before the patrol begins.

Patrols frequently last most of the day. They encounter everything from improvised explosive devices (IED) to cars broken down on the

roadside. Oftentimes, insurgents will shoot at them.

The patrol Comanche Troop run in this particular afternoon and evening starts off typically quiet.

Several times they spot cars sitting on the highway's narrow shoulder. Soldiers hop out of the vehicles and tell the drivers they have to move.

"Yeah, this is how we live," said Sgt. Faheed Alajmi, a cavalry scout in Comanche Troop, while driving his Humvee. In front of him was an M-2A3 Bradley Cavalry Fighting Vehicle.

The most exciting part of the day happened a short time later. The Bradley's commander, Staff Sgt. Darrin Boner, called on the radio.

"There's a dead dog on the side of the road," he said. A gray t-shirt covered its abdomen. It could have been an IED.

The patrol stopped in the middle of the highway to investigate. Traffic, though, didn't stop, and continued to drive around the vehicles. Some of the locals slowed down enough to look at the dog before speeding off in clouds of dust.

Boner picked up a pair of

binoculars.

"It's wrapped in a t-shirt," Boner said. The Bradley driver moved the vehicle so Boner could get a better look. He didn't see any wires coming out of it, so the patrol drove down some, hopping the median and coming back around to block traffic. An Explosive Ordnance Disposal team from

Camp Ferrin-Huggins was called.

Traffic on the major highway still didn't stop, though. Even with the troopers' extraordinary efforts to stop it, the traffic was like a river that can't be dammed. The drivers saw the Humvee and Bradley sitting in the road and simply drove around them. Pedestrians walked dangerously close to the dog. Some

of the troopers just shook their heads at the sight.

After a while, Task Force Iron Claws showed up. The large, ungainly-looking Buffalo vehicle that sweeps major roads around the city for IEDs lumbered down the road to the dog. The crew inside picked it up with the vehicle's attached long claw and then dropped it back to the ground. They did this not once, not twice, but four times. The dog doesn't blow up.

With that, the patrol mounted back up and continued their circuit around the highway.

The patrols aren't always this quiet, said Breeding and Alajmi. During one break, in the shade of a building, they spoke bluntly about insurgents firing rocket-propelled grenades at them. Occasionally, insurgents would fire small arms. It's all par for the course for the patrols.

Finally, long after the sun set and the reddish after glow faded, the patrol received a call they've waited for. Their relief, another patrol from 1-7 Cav. arrived.

The drive home was quiet. Nothing went "boom" on the way back.



By Cpl. Bill Putnam, 122nd MPAD

Sgt. Kofie Antwi, a medic in Troop C, 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, and Pvt. Ronald Sapp, a cavalry scout in Troop C, 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, pull security on Highway 8 after a suspected improvised explosive device (IED) was found during a patrol.



## The ABC's of Safety

### *Attitude, Behavior, and Control*

-A safe attitude means staying alert and focused on the job at hand.

-Safe behavior means taking safety guidelines and practices seriously.

-Control means taking responsibility.

Safety is more than just following your commander's guidelines while on the job. Safety is actually a combination of safe attitude, behavior, and control both on and off the job. Attitude means your frame of mind -- the way in which you approach a given situation. Behavior means what you do about it -- how you react to a situation. Control refers to making your surroundings -- where you do what you do -- safe. Safe attitude, behavior, and control add up to a safer, more productive you.

ABC's -- Easy as 1-2-3. Attitude, behavior, and control are the three most important (and perhaps the simplest) aspects of personal safety both on and off duty. Take a moment to review your safety ABC's to see if you're doing all you can to protect yourself from careless, needless, injury.

## 10th Mtn. Gets Connected

By Pfc. Brian Schroeder  
10th Mtn. Div. Public Affairs

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq - In the technological era we live in, communication is vital. Through the use of cell phones and the internet, people are able to communicate across oceans in seconds.

Soldiers from Company B, 10th Signal Battalion, have made worldwide communication possible for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 10th Mountain Division, by establishing telephone, radio and internet communications at their newly established home.

"Our main mission for the BCT will be providing them tactical communications for receiving information from 1st Cavalry Division and higher," said Capt. Richard D. Snowdall, Company B, 10th Signal Battalion, commander.

Since their recent arrival at Camp Victory, they have contributed communication support to each battalion throughout the BCT with a network of wires and cables.

"As soon as we got on ground we've been working on establishing the BCT's communications," Snowdall said.

Pvt. Brian Fink, Company B, 10th Signal Battalion, multi-channel transfer systems operator said setting up an operations center for the company is first priority when they arrive at a new location. At



By Pfc. Brian Schroeder, 10th Mtn. Div. Public Affairs

Sgt. Jeffrey Flora, Pfc. Miles Kysef and Pfc. Phillip Rodriguez, Company B, 10th Signal Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, lay cables for an internet connection. Company B, 10th Signal Battalion, is attached to the 1st Cavalry Division while deployed to Iraq.

Fort Drum, the signal Soldiers would practice setting up their operations center in two or three man teams.

"When we roll out, we have a standard of 20 minutes to get the first antenna set up," Fink said.

Laying telephone and internet lines is a primary task for the signal company, but Snowdall said their job consists mainly of improving the existing network.

"Sometimes users are not ready for the capabilities we are giving them," he said. "Other times, because the network is so immature, we spend a lot of time building in redundancy, such as getting the user phones and other needed equipment."

Snowdall says he owes a lot of credit to the 13th Signal Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, for their assistance in getting established.

"They are a godsend," he said. "They have gone above and beyond in helping us out."

Through the help of other units and the knowledge of their own Soldiers, Company B, 10th Signal Battalion, have the capabilities to help support the 2nd BCT, 10th Mountain and the 1st Cavalry Division during their deployment.

"We are designed to go in with a brigade combat team and provide them with reach-back capabilities to higher," Snowdall said. "This is what we are here to do."

## Army Doctor Gives Medical Treatment to Attempted Suicide Bomber

By Pfc. Brian Schroeder  
10th Mtn. Div. Public Affairs

CAMP VICTORY NORTH, Baghdad-- Tragedy can strike at any time or place, and when it does, doctors and medics are usually there to care for those injured by the catastrophe.

Lt. Col. Arthur Delorimier, 210th Forward Support Battalion, 10th Mountain Division, senior physician was working his evening shift the with three medics from the 15th Forward Support Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division. He said the evening quickly became busy when a group of injured Iraqi National Guardsmen showed up at the clinic.

"The first set of patients came in at about seven in the evening," Delorimier said. "It was a group of eight Iraqi National Guard troops who had rolled their vehicle."

Quick action was taken

once the Guardsmen reached the clinic. Delorimier said he made a phone call and the 15 FSB medical team was at the clinic in less than ten minutes.

Delorimier specializes in pediatric gastroenterology and said he has not had to provide aid to a trauma patient in more than six years. He said the limited experience with trauma patients did not affect the treatment of the victims.

"We took good care of these guys and we were done within an hour and a half," he said.

Of the eight guardsmen, Delorimier said three were seriously injured.

"Three of them sustained serious head, neck, face and ear injuries," he said. "They were airlifted out on a bird in less than 20 minutes. The rest were not as serious, just a few broken bones and some scrapes and bruises."



By Pfc. Brian Schroeder, 10th Mtn. Div. PAD  
Lt. Col. Arthur Delorimier

Just as things began to slow down in the clinic, Delorimier said he received a call alerting him another patient was on the way. The patient arrived three minutes after the call, an unknown Iraqi was brought to the clinic for treatment.

"The patient came in with

a bunch of shrapnel in his rear end and lacerations on his left hand," he said. "We cleaned that gentleman's wounds and gave him [intravenous] fluids."

While Delorimier was cleaning the patient's wounds, he said an American lieutenant began interrogating the patient.

"At the time I didn't know the whole story behind this guy," he explained. "Apparently the guy I was working on was an Iraqi insurgent who was shooting [rocket propelled grenades] at a few of our boys, but he missed each time. When he realized our Soldiers were going to capture him, he decided he was going to take some American lives and be a suicide bomber. Instead he blew a hand grenade under his butt and it blew a bunch of shrapnel into his left thigh and hand."

Delorimier said while the

story of the patient he was working on unfolded, a fury began to build up inside of him.

"The more of the story I heard, the more angry I got," he said. "But I was still able to do my job and realized I am a professional and I'm going to take care of this guy. If I was the doctor taking care of Saddam Hussein, I would still have bad feelings about it, but I would have bitten my tongue and taken care of him just like I do with any of my patients. It's the professional thing to do."

The anger and rage he felt, slowly turned to sympathy, Delorimier said.

"I had pity for him, just like I do with any of my patients," he said. "But when I reflect on that, it's because he is pitiful. His whole goal was pitiful. His whole idea of trying to kill himself and others around him was pitiful."

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## Killeen-Fort Hood Regional Airport Takes Off

By Sgt. Greg Heath  
4th PAD

KILLEEN, Texas-- Things have begun taking off in Killeen in a big way as the city opened its new \$83 million Killeen-Fort Hood Regional Airport for business Monday morning.

The new airport is a joint-use airport that shares the runway with Robert Gray Army Airfield in West Fort Hood.

The new state-of-the-art airport and Ted C. Connell Terminal are the culmination of more than eight years of planning and work among not only Fort Hood and Killeen officials, but also county, state and federal officials. Congressman Chet Edwards (D-Texas) who attended the airport's opening celebration on Friday, said.

"With the opening of the Ted C. Connell Terminal and the joint-use airport, the city of Killeen truly opens a new chapter in its history," Edwards said, adding the joint-use airport will bring with it safer, more efficient air travel for local and military patrons, as well as greater economic opportunities for Central Texas.

Along with a more modern, conveniently designed terminal, one of the biggest differences between the new facil-

ity and the old Killeen Municipal Airport is that the new airport will be able to accommodate larger regional jets that can carry more passengers and luggage, according to Killeen Mayor Maureen Jouett.

Killeen Municipal's old runway, measuring in at about 5,000 feet, was too small to land larger jets, but the runway at Gray Airfield is more than double that size.

In addition to bringing more regional flights out of the Killeen, the airport will also bring an estimated 800 new jobs related directly to the airfield, Jouett said, citing a study by the Perryman Group.

"This airport is the biggest thing that's happened to Killeen since Fort Hood came here as Camp Hood in 1942," said Jouett, who was serving as mayor when the airport groundbreaking ceremony took place four years ago.

Killeen isn't the only side reaping benefits, as Fort Hood's side of the airfield received more than \$75 million worth of renovations and upgrades to the existing facilities.

With the improvements on the military side of the airfield, Soldiers will be able to deploy and redeploy more rapidly and safely, said Maj. Gen. James



By Sgt. Greg Heath, 4th PAD

Rep. Chet Edwards (D-Texas) and Killeen City Council members cut a ribbon at the grand opening of the Killeen-Fort Hood Regional Airport. Simmons, III Corps Deputy Commander, at the opening celebration.

The partnership will also save Fort Hood money in the long run, according to U.S. Army Col. (Ret.) Dave Hall, chairman of the board, Killeen Chamber of Commerce.

"The way the Army benefits is that we now share the maintenance of the airfield,

so Killeen and Fort Hood work together on the maintenance," Hall said. "So it's a cost savings on both sides."

Killeen Municipal Airport has been renamed Skylark Field and will remain open for general aviation use.

Killeen's airport identifier code will change from ILE to GRK for Gray Army Airfield.

## Vital Link to Open Soon in Ore.

By Bob Keefer  
The Register-Guard

EUGENE, Ore.-- Never mind that the temporary Interstate 5 bridge over the Willamette won't actually open for another week.

The fast-track project was ready enough for the snipping of a red ribbon and praise for an early completion that will net the contractor more than \$300,000.

"One year ago if we were standing out here, we'd have to be in hip waders," quipped Oregon Transportation Commissioner Randy Pape.

That bridge will be demolished and rebuilt after the 2,000-foot detour bridge opens for business.

"A lot of times we criticize people in government for not making things happen," Eugene Mayor Jim Torrey said. "Well, this time they made it happen, in a hurry."

In fact: 328 days from the start of construction to the official ceremony.

The plan for the \$29 million project began when inspectors found shear cracks throughout the reinforced concrete beams that hold up the old I-5 bridge, built in 1962.

The Oregon Department of Transportation immediately



By Thomas Boyd, The Register-Guard

The I-5 detour bridge (right) over the Willamette River nears completion as workers install the finishing touches.

closed both bridges to heavy-haul trucks, which were then required to detour as far east as Highway 97 or west to Highway 99 to go north or south.

To reopen the freeway to heavy trucks, the state is building or renovating three bridges here: The most obvious is the temporary four-lane bridge over the Willamette River just east of downtown Eugene. A smaller bridge that spans Patterson Slough is so close to the large bridge that it seems part of the same structure.

Hamilton Construction of Springfield, the lead contractor on the project with partner Wildish Construction of Eugene, is to receive a bonus of \$20,000 for each day the bridges open ahead of Sept. 4; if the bridges open as expected next

week, it will get \$340,000 under the special incentive contract.

Construction of a permanent bridge over the Willamette lies somewhere between five and 10 years away, depending on who's talking.

When the new bridge is built, the temporary bridge will be taken down, piece by piece; many of its components, such as the 390 cast-concrete box beams that hold up much of the bridge deck, can be removed and reused.

Springfield Mayor Sid Leiken is hoping to see a showcase bridge someday over the Willamette that will become a monument welcoming travelers to both cities.

"When that new bridge is built, I'm going to guess it will be pretty stunning," he said.

## U.S. Environmental Chief Pays Visit to Lake Ontario

By Mark Weiner  
Post-Standard

LAKE ONTARIO, N.Y.-- President Bush's environmental chief visited Central New York on Tuesday to see Lake Ontario - the good, the bad and the potential for the future - for the first time. And he was impressed by what he saw. Mike Leavitt, administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, took a one-hour tour of the lake and Port of Oswego while on board a World War II-era tugboat.

In the middle of his tour, he offered his first impression of the smallest of the Great Lakes, one that covers 7,540 square miles.

"I think most people would be surprised by the size and scope of it," Leavitt said. "There's nothing like seeing it to understand it."

The former Utah governor, who took over the EPA on Nov. 6, joined about 25 federal, state and local officials on the former U.S. Army tug Maj. Elisha K. Henson.

The tug, based at the H. Lee White Marine Museum in Oswego, is a National Historic Landmark known as LT-5 because it was the fifth-largest Army tug of eight manufactured for the D-Day invasion. It moved barges and ammunition to the beaches of Normandy.

Tuesday, the tug's mission was to help make Leavitt and Bush aware of the environmental issues facing the Great Lakes as

the administration attempts to build support for a federal initiative focusing on the lakes.

Leavitt is meeting with public officials throughout the Great Lakes to encourage cooperation with a federal Great Lakes task force that will address nine priority issues facing the region.

Earlier this month, New York joined an interstate compact that would make it nearly impossible to divert large quantities of water from the Great Lakes to other parts of the country.

He said the two biggest problems facing the Great Lakes are invasive species, such as zebra mussels, and the overflow of sewage into the lakes and their tributaries.

The EPA administrator said he learned Tuesday how vital Lake Ontario is to the community, serving important roles for recreation, tourism, commerce, industry and as the source of drinking water for Central New York.

Leavitt said he knew the clear water was probably one of the few beneficial aspects of zebra mussels, dime-sized mollusks that have caused billions of dollars worth of damage in the Great Lakes.

Leavitt said the first goal of the administration's Great Lakes task force will be to develop action plans to deal with the nine priorities singled out by stakeholders in the states bordering the lakes.



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## Illinois Fair-goers Try to Stay Warm

BELVIDERE, Illinois-- They came bundled in jackets, sweaters and blankets on opening day of the Boone County Fair Tuesday.

Coffee, hot cocoa and hot tubs seemed unusually popular on a day when the calendar read "August."

"You always worry about whether you'll need to buy a fan," said Poplar Grove's Lars Lee, whose daughters will show two 4-H lambs and a rabbit.

"I can always find a way to warm up, but I have a hard time cooling down."

Lee said that the weather, with highs in the 60s predicted through Thursday, will "be good for livestock, but may be bad for attendance."

Fair organizers agree. The fair runs through Sunday. Last year, the fair drew 203,770 people, up from 201,000 in 2002. A record crowd of 208,000 was reported in 1998.

President Al Henninger and Vice President Jack Ratcliffe say weather is about 50 percent of the fair's success. People come for the food, rides and entertainment, but lots of heat, cold or, worse yet, rain can undermine the best of events.



By Eddy Montville, Rockford Register Star

Jennifer Rayphole (left) reacts to being named Miss Boone County Fair 2004 at the fairgrounds Tuesday night. At right is first runner-up Kristen Simpkins.

Fair-goers can expect a shower here and there and temperatures running nearly 20 degrees below normal.

"It always rains," said Chris James of DuQuoin. James was born in Belvidere and made the annual six-hour trek to the fair.

She and friend Tami Smith

were ready for any type of weather. They sported jackets with short-sleeved shirts underneath while their 1-year-old children were wrapped in blankets in their strollers.

"I do hope it gets warmer," Smith said.

Members of the Ellingson

family were washing pigs in preparation for the big weigh-in Tuesday evening.

"Yeah, it's cold," laughed Bob Ellingson of Poplar Grove. "We have been showing pigs since 1974. I can't recall it ever being this cool. But this is good, the animals are a lot nicer to work

with."

Justin Ellingson, 9, Bob's grandson, has been showing his seven pigs, the Seven Dwarfs, since age 4. His 5-year-old brother, Jared, also will show a swine.

"It's just having fun around the pigs," said Justin, while using a hose with a spray nozzle to wash the shampoo off the backs of two of his pigs as they squealed and snorted.

"You can see how good the pigs are," Justin said.

Some folks could recall worse weather. In 1987, for example, rain flooded the fairgrounds. Henninger said it took a major effort to move the grandstand act, country star Reba McEntire, to the Community Building Complex of Boone County in downtown Belvidere. The building needed rewiring, and there were parking and transportation issues before McEntire could take the stage. Firefighters and the School District helped out.

"The schools, they let us use their parking lots and they helped transport people in," Henninger said.

Ratcliffe added, "It just showed us what kind of good people we have living here."

## 'Little Ray Lewis' Patrolling Field for ASU Defense

By Seth Holmun  
Sun sports writer

JONESBORO, Ark.-- Over 40 pounds lighter, a slimmer, trimmer Kevin Corless strolled across the field, looking every bit like he could strap on the pads again and retake the form of the all-conference linebacker at Northwest Missouri State he was 20 years ago.

One thing the Arkansas State co-defensive coordinator and linebackers coach did not shed in the offseason was that mean gleam in his eye when it comes to defense.

"I told the guys they better watch out. I could still play. I could go one play but I could still play," Corless said.

Corless knows defense and he knows linebackers. He also doesn't hide the fact that he knows he has a young dandy.

Redshirt freshman Josh Williams turned heads last year when he practiced and traveled with the team. The "oohs" and "aahs" at spring practice usually erupted from the sidelines when number 14 had laid a lick.

"That there is a little Ray Lewis," former ASU all-Sun Belt cornerback Johnathan Burke once said.

Williams (6-1, 218) played his way into the starting Will linebacker spot in spring, forcing the staff to move senior Eddie Walker to the backup Sam spot

behind senior Steven Tookes. He is now one of four redshirt freshmen slated to start in ASU's back seven.

"Last year it helped me to learn the defense a little better and get the experience in travel," Williams said. "When spring ball came, I just had to let it loose."

He has heard the top shelf comparisons to the All-Pro Lewis before, primarily because of his vision, speed and ability to lay the wood on the field.

"I would agree with that," Williams quietly said. "I kind of use that as motivation to help me get to that next level. It's a reaction-type deal. They tell me I play on instinct most of the time, so that's what I try to do."

The 2001 Offensive Back of the Year and 2002 Defensive Player of the Year at Hardin-Jefferson High School in Hardin, Texas, Williams chose ASU over New Mexico, McNeese State and Northwestern (La.) State.

Almost immediately the word was out. This kid could play and offenses would pay.

"I think probably the single greatest asset is that he has linebacker vision or intuition," Corless said. "He's got tailback-type vision. He can see that daylight just like the running backs can. Number two would be, he's a very physical player."

"There are definitely some things that separate some guys from others that are nat-

urally and instinctual. He brings some of those things to the table."

Williams earned valuable experience traveling with the team last year, practicing to pick up his assignments in the Indians' 4-2-5 scheme and attending position meetings as a redshirt.

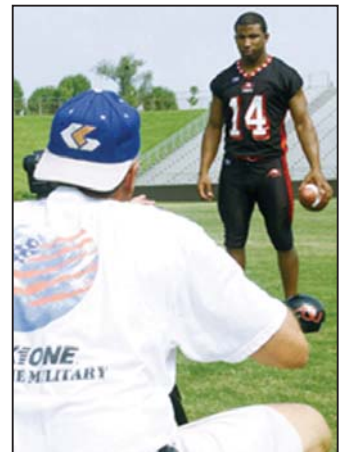
"I think Josh of course benefited from that redshirt year," Corless said. "We wanted him to travel and if something came up where we had to play him, we would. Our hopes were to keep him as a redshirt all year long and that's what happened."

While blessed with natural ability, instincts and the base knowledge of the Indian defense, Williams has never seen a snap in the game - like over half of the ASU team.

"He gained some things last year - he was on the plane and on the bus and he was out there at practice," Corless said. "But it's different when you walk out there. I mean those eyes are going to be big. But he has confidence in himself. He's not cocky but he has confidence and I think that helps you overcome those kind of things."

A linebacker since the seventh grade, Williams has that swagger. He's quiet off the field but he likes to be up close and personal on it. There's just one thing he can't wait to do.

"Hit somebody. That's all I'm thinking about. Hitting somebody and being where



By Heather Hankins, Jonesboro Sun

Arkansas State redshirt freshman Josh Williams poses for individual pictures Monday at media day. Williams, a hard hitter from China, Texas, is the Indians' starting Will linebacker as fall camp gets underway.

"I'm supposed to be, knowing my assignments," Williams said. "My confidence level is pretty high. Once I get past the first hit, I'll be all right. That's what I'm looking forward to."

## Soldiers Find a Bit of Home

By Pfc. Al Barrus  
122nd MPAD

CAMP FERRIN-HUGGINS, Baghdad-- From the hot, dry heat to the ever-present dust that settles everywhere, Iraq is a strange place for most Soldiers. The day in the life of a deployed troop doesn't always include all the right ingredients to make him comfortable, but luckily there are always some things he can do to make him feel more at home.

There sometimes is a special area he goes to enjoy his worldly pastimes. It may be the basketball court: possibly the Internet café. Some places of recreation are found in less likely areas.

One such area lies outside in a corner of the Headquarters Company barracks next to the 5th Brigade Combat Team headquarters on Camp Ferrin Huggins. An I-beam lies on the cracked asphalt; its edges coated in wax. A dismounted handrail held in place by sandbags stands 10 inches off the ground.

The sight might confuse bystanders, until its architect's arrive. The sun begins to set and four friends convene with weapons slung as they cling onto wheeled boards before slapping them on the pavement, and this assembly of random objects begins to look more like a crude excuse for a skate park.

"We didn't have a whole lot to do in our free time at night," said Spc. Joshua Frisbee, a command post operator for Headquarters Company. "So we decided to start skating out here."

Frisbee and three other friends, some who enjoyed skateboarding back in Fort Hood, Texas, found the resources to bring something from home to Camp Ferrin-Huggins.

"We have been skating here for about two months now," Pfc. Daniel Leamy, a communications specialist said. "We find scrap wood and metal around the camp and make what we can."



Photos by Pfc. Al Barrus, 122nd MPAD

Sgt. Chris Geraurd, an Iraqi National Guard trainer in Headquarters Company, 5th Brigade Combat Team, and six-year skater, pulls off a "grab." Geraurd and three friends spend a couple hours four times a week enjoying one of their favorite pastimes, as well trying to build more obstacles in their skate park outside the barracks.

Some of them are more skilled at the sport than others. The skilled skaters challenge themselves using an I-beam to perform grinds. They also assist the rookies in perfecting the basic tricks such as the "Ollie," where the skater jumps and positions his feet so the board jumps with him. But even the experienced can learn things from the newbies.

"I have about six years of skating experience," Sgt. Chris Geraurd, an Iraqi National Guard trainer said. "Dawson just started skating, so I teach him how to skate and he teaches me how to play the

guitar."

Skateboarding isn't the most popular sport around, and back home some skaters often receive flak for it from authority figures, but it's a different feeling out here.

"No one ever gets on our case about skateboarding out here," Geraurd said. "It seems like out here everyone sees it as just another sport: another way to relieve the stress of being away from home."

Home has a different definition for this alliance of skaters, as they all come from diverse regions of the United States.

"We come from a lot of different parts of the country," Spc. Eric Dawson, a gunner for the brigade commander's personal security team said. "I'm from Oklahoma, Geraurd is from California, Frisbee is from Ohio and Leamy's from Alabama."

Though the four of them are in the same company, their work areas and job titles are as varied as their home towns.

"We don't get to hang out or talk much or at all during the day," Dawson said. "But at night when we come back to the barracks, it's like we are back at Fort Hood."



Racing up to an I-beam serving as a grind bar, command post operator and rookie skateboarder Spc. Joshua Frisbee of Headquarters Company, 5th Brigade Combat Team braces himself before executing a grind.

## STDs and Unplanned Pregnancies Avoidable

Continued from page 3

lower abdomen.

Genital warts do not even have a cure. "You can burn them off with chemicals or liquid nitrogen, but a lot of times they keep coming back," Nang said. Not everyone has symptoms, but if they do, they include painless warts on and inside the genitals. The disease is extremely contagious, and it can even be passed from person to person if no symptoms are present. Genital warts are associated with cervical cancer, in addition to cancer of the penis and anus.

Syphilis is spread through unprotected sex with an infected partner, although it can be spread through nonsexual contact with a syphilitic sore and broken skin. Syphilis has three stages, the primary, latent and tertiary. During the primary stage, sores generally develop on the genitals, but can show up anywhere on the body. The sores are painless and go away in a few weeks without treatment. If the disease is not treated in the primary stage, it will progress to the latent stage.

In the latent stage, there are no symptoms. "It's kind of waiting for the opportune time to show up," Nang said. If not treated at this point, syphilis will move into the tertiary stage. In this stage, the infection will still be in the body and can cause blindness, heart disease, brain damage, mental illness and serious damage to bones, joints, and the nervous system. Syphilis can eventually kill.

Genital herpes may develop anywhere from two to ten days after exposure, lasting about two to three weeks. The symptoms consist of itching or burning, leg pain, secretion from the genitals or vagina, and blisters or painful open sores. "When you get herpes, it's very painful," Nang said. Herpes can be treated but many who have the disease suffer reoccurrences of the sores.

The worst STD is the most obvious, HIV, the virus that leads to AIDS. "There's really no cure for HIV," Nang said. HIV weakens the immune system. This is another tricky disease that may or may not show symptoms. HIV is spread through unprotected sex with an infected partner. Some of the possible symptoms are flu like symptoms, swollen lymph glands, recurrent fevers, rapid weight loss, constant tiredness and white spots in the mouth.

If a Soldier suspects they have an STD, they should go to sick call immediately. The staff will do their best to maintain the Soldiers privacy. "The interviews and the examinations are done in private surroundings," Nang said.

Most STDs can be treated in country. "With HIV you would be sent home," Nang said. "Herpes, gonorrhea, chlamydia, that can be treated here."

If a Soldier is found to have one STD, they are tested for all STDs. "I've actually treated patients that has had two or three STDs," he said.

The best protection against STDs and unwanted pregnancies is not having sex at all. "If you abstain, your risk for getting any STDs or becoming pregnant on an unplanned basis is zero," Nang said.

Of course if a Soldier is going to engage in sex, they need to be protected. A barrier method, such as a condom should be used. "If condoms are used properly and conscientiously, not only will they protect you against STDs, they will also prevent you from becoming involved in an unplanned pregnancy," Nang said.

Protecting against unwanted pregnancy is important. "There are many different contraceptives, oral contraceptives, Depo-Provera shots," Nang said. When these methods are used correctly, the failure rates are low.

Soldiers should know the signs and symptoms of STDs. They should be able to communicate with their partner, so they can make more informed decisions.

"There are significant risks from a casual sex interaction that's not well thought out, in terms of STDs or unwanted pregnancy," Nang said. "People need to know there are far-reaching consequences with the contraction of an STD or becoming pregnant."



## Gunner's Gate Soldiers Guard Against Heat

By Sgt. Merrion LaSonde  
122nd MPAD

CAMP COOKE, Taji, Iraq—Spc. Brian Anderson, a gate guard at Gunners Gate, recently found out just how important hydration is in the harsh desert climate and rising summer temperatures of Iraq.

"Shortly after I got to work, I started feeling upset to my stomach," Anderson said. "About 15 minutes later I was dry heaving and dizzy and went to see the medic."

The day before had been the Lisbon, Ohio native's day off which he spent sleeping.

"I did not drink enough water so when I got to work, I was already dehydrated," Anderson said.

The medics administered intravenous fluids, monitored Anderson for a while to make sure there was nothing more seriously wrong with him and sent him home for the rest of the day.

"These Soldiers that work the gate are on duty from six in the morning to two in the afternoon," said Capt. David Stapp, commander, Battery C, 1st Battalion, 206th Field Artillery, 39th Brigade Combat Team. "They are on their feet, exposed to the sun the entire time."

A resident of Morrilton, Ark., Stapp explained that the unit covering the watch at



Photos by Sgt. Merrion LaSonde, 122nd MPAD

Spc. Julio Standridge, Company C, 1st Battery, 206th Field Artillery, stays hydrated while standing his watch as perimeter gunner at Camp Cooke's Gunner's Gate.

Gunner's Gate tries to mitigate the effects of the exposure to the sun and heat in many ways.

"At the beginning of every watch, the supply sergeant makes an ice run," Stapp said. "We get enough ice to keep the water cool until our shift change. We also try to create shade wherever we can by using camouflage netting."

In addition, the Soldiers are rotated five at a time to an air conditioned building behind the gate for an hour of their shift.

"We give them an opportunity to take a break from the heat," Stapp said. "We also rotate the Soldier who monitors the radio traffic out here. That person sits in the air condi-

tioned building for their entire shift and maintains our communication with headquarters."

For some of the areas without air conditioning, the Soldiers are using swamp coolers, a fan with a water-fed screen filter that blows water-cooled air. It is capable of dropping the temperature in the immediate area by 20 degrees.

With temperatures above 110 degrees on a regular basis and expectations of hotter days to come, Spc. Loreen Davenport, a Company C medic and preventive medicine representative, is surprised at the lack of heat injuries that have been seen at "Charlie Med".

"Most cases that we have

seen have been of mild dehydration," Davenport said. "I'm guessing there are more cases out there just not seeking medical attention. Some Soldiers may have a severe heat illness, but they are just writing it off to being tired so as not to hamper their mission."

Davenport, of Little Rock, Ark., explained the importance of knowing how to identify a heat casualty.

"Once a heat casualty; always a heat casualty," Davenport said. "Basically all that means is if you have ever succumbed to a heat-related illness, you are now considered susceptible to them. It may never happen to you again, but

we have to treat you as if it could happen at any time."

Signs of heat-related illnesses are dizziness, nausea, vomiting, weakness or fatigue and hot-dry skin.

"If someone who has spent a long period of time in the heat is not sweating, they need to seek medical attention," Davenport said. "Very often a person suffering from a heat-related illness has no idea until it is too late, so it is very important to watch your buddy."

Along with the many other precautions Stapp has taken at Gunner's Gate to ensure the Soldiers stay healthy and hydrated, he has also placed heat casualty information pamphlets in each of the guard shacks.

With medics on-hand at the gate and all the other precautions put in place, the risk of more Soldiers succumbing to heat illnesses or injuries is lower, but still a possibility.

While the heat is still a factor and will be for some time in the future, the ultimate responsibility comes down to the individual Soldier.

Spc. Julio Standridge, perimeter gunner at Gunner's Gate and Dover, Ark. native, sums it up by saying, "I drink water and my buddy checks up on me, but in the end all I can do is deal with it."

### Our Fallen Troops

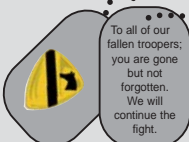
Spc. Justin Onwordi

Pfc. Harry Shondee

Sgt. Tommy Grant

Spc. Joshua Issac Bunch

Pfc. David Potter



By Spc. Marie Whitney, 122nd MPAD



By Sgt. Merrion LaSonde, 122nd MPAD

(Above) Friends and teammates stand guard in front of Spc. Ken Leisten's memorial. Leisten, a member of the Oregon National Guard, Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 162 Infantry, who changed units and military jobs to come to Iraq, died while on patrol in the Taji area. (Left) Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, pay their last respects to fallen brothers in arms, Spc. Justin Onwordi and Pfc. Harry Shondee during their memorial service that took place Aug. 5.

## 'I, Robot': Fun, Full of Great Visual Effects

*I, Robot* is an enjoyable popcorn ride of a flick, designed to be a smooth and cool entertainment confection for summer audiences back home-and for the most part, it works.

Will Smith returns once again to the summer screen (this is his third summer in a row after *Men in Black II* and the raucously over-the-top *Bad Boys II*) starring as Chicago Homicide Detective Del Spooner, in the year 2035. A fan of Converse All-Stars "Vintage 2004" and self-proclaimed "last sane man on Earth," Spooner is a man who is an unashamed bigot; against robots that is.

You see, in this future, US Robotics dominates the planet's technology industry, churning out robots that take care of everything from menial tasks such as picking up trash and cooking, to much greater tasks such as our national defenses.

Spooner's fear of and obvious hate for robots is at first a mystery to the audience (though one that is revealed as the movie progresses), because as everybody in the film quickly proclaims, USR makes its robots "3 Laws Safe."

As *I, Robot's* opening title sequence states: 1) A Robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm; 2) A Robot

### Movie Corner

PFC Erik LeDrew



Movie Critic

must obey orders given it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the first law; and lastly, 3) A Robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the first or second law.

In reality, these three laws were dreamed-up in the 1950s by renowned scientist-author Isaac Asimov, who used his "I, Robot" series of short stories, which this film was "suggested by," to explore both the positive and negative implications of living in a society permeated with robots.

In this movie, as Smith's Spooner observes in the film "laws are made to be broken." At least, that's the way it seems, after he is called to investigate the apparent suicide of Dr. Alfred Lanning, co-founder of US Robotics, on the eve of the company's mass-distribution of its newest robot the Nestor Class 5 (possibly named after the sage-



Photo © Copyright 20th Century Fox

Will Smith as, Del Spooner, a Chicago homicide detective in the in the new movie 'I, Robot'.

like Nestor in Homer's *Iliad*), during which USR plans to put "A robot in every home."

Obviously, USR wishes to avoid the bad press and being the powerful company that is, orders Spooner to quickly wrap-up the investigation. Well, like all good, disobedient cops (at least in the movies), Spooner neglects his orders, following that staple-of-the-genre "hunch" that inevitably leads our protagonist to something much more insidious.

All of this transpires within the first half-hour of the movie, so much about the movie's delicate twists hasn't been revealed here, and isn't about to be, for that is one of this movie's delights: its ability to

surprise. That's not to say there is some shocker a la *The Sixth Sense*, just that the movie grows on you, slowly bringing you into its kind of cool, adjusting its rhythm ever so slightly, until before you even realize it, you're as engrossed in what's going on as the characters are themselves.

Aside from plot points, among other welcome surprises this movie offers is Will Smith's dialed down persona. While *Bad Boys II* was about an 11.5 on the "Big Willi Style" personality scale, Smith plays Del Spooner as more of a 7.5: it's still there, but it's not in your face.

This greatly helps the quasi-"film noir" atmosphere director

Alex Proyas toys with throughout the film. While this film largely ignores the essential "noir" visual style-contrasting the usual "gray" characters by filming them immersed in dark shadow and bright light-the cynical noir hero is alive and well in Spooner's wise-cracking, go-against-the-grain detective.

Along the way, Spooner meets Dr. Susan Calvin (Bridget Moynahan) who is less interesting than the robots she "helps make more human," and a very interesting NS-5 robot named "Sonny," voiced by Alan Tudyk, a comedian who imbues the computer-generated robot with a wonderful dose of humanity.

There are a few whiz-bang visual effects sequences in the film, namely a well-orchestrated chase-scene inside of a tunnel and the final showdown at the top of a high-rise, all of which is transitioned into from the less showy moments in the film with wonderful surety by director Alex Proyas and his talented team of visual effects artists.

Proyas was quoted in an interview with *Wired* magazine that he likes to make movies for child-minded adults.

Overall, *I, Robot* is a smart flick but isn't so uptight it forgets to have fun.

## Seattelite Hopeful for 2-0 Seahawk Start

The exhibition slate for the National Football League is underway. The Washington Redskins gave coach Joe Gibbs a "W" in his first game back at the helm just the other night.

It is time to start picking the winners and losers of the upcoming NFL season. I'll look into my crystal ball each issue and pick two weeks at a time - how's THAT for prognostication! And I'll be asking a loyal reader to come along for the ride each time, to see if they've got what it takes to be a football handicapper.

Our inaugural guest prognosticator is the plans officer for the 1st Cavalry Division's Information Operations cell, Capt. Mark Favero. He's a Washington state native and diehard Seahawks fan, who believes his club will open up the season 2-0.

Week One picks:

### Indianapolis at New England

We both went with the reigning Super Bowl champions in the opener. Indy just isn't a good road team against tough competition. Peyton Manning will throw for a couple of scores, but Tom Brady will slice up the Colts defense.

### Jacksonville at Buffalo

Favero took the Jaguars in this one, but I like the new Bills offense featuring Willis McGahee's rebuilt knee. With the pressure off of Drew Bledsoe to throw every down, Buffalo will be an offensive juggernaut.

naut.

### Detroit at Chicago

Our guest took the visiting Lions. I like the Bears. (You won't see that often from a Packer fan!)

### Baltimore at Cleveland

Another split decision: Favero takes the Browns at home, while I think the Ravens defense is too good for Cleveland to cope with.

### San Diego at Houston

The Chargers have been picked by most pre-season magazines to be the worst team in the league. Favero picked them to win their opener against an improving Texan team. I didn't. Houston wins at home.

### Tennessee at Miami

We finally agree again on this one. A.J. Feely is the new Miami quarterback, and he doesn't have Ricky Williams to hand off to 30 times a game. Expect a low scoring defensive battle, with the Titans coming out on top.

### Seattle at New Orleans

We both like the Seahawks, the captain because he's a homey and me because the Saints ain't all that.

### Cincinnati at New York Jets

Three in a row! We agree ... again! The Vulcan Mind-Meld is in effect. The Jets will win their home opener.

### Oakland at Pittsburgh

Favero takes the Silver and Black on the road. I think Bill Cowher will have the Steelers back

### Trigger Pull

MSG Dave Larsen



Sports Buff

in contention this year.

### Arizona at St. Louis

"I'm feeling very 'away' this week," is Favero's explanation for taking the lowly Cardinals to win in St. Louis. Call it his upset special. I call it crazy. The Rams win ... big.

### Tampa Bay at Washington

After watching the Redskins beat the Broncos in their pre-season opener, Favero takes the 'Skins at home. Not me. Tampa Bay wins their opener, spoiling Gibbs' official NFL return.

### Dallas at Minnesota

The Cowboys made the playoffs last season. Minnesota choked on the final play of the year and stayed home. Even so, we both like the Vikes at home in the dome.

### N.Y. Giants at Philadelphia

No toss up here. The Eagles have been to the NFC championship game three years in a row. The Giants have a new coach and a new quarterback. This one will be ugly. Philly wins.

### Atlanta at San Francisco

In another strange quirk,

Favero actually **LIKES** the 49ers this year (he's got them starting off 2-0). Not me. I've got the boys from the bay area losing this one and again in Week Two.

### Kansas City at Denver

Again taking the visiting team, Favero went with the Chiefs. While I picked the Chiefs to run the table, I think Mike Shanahan's Broncos will pin a loss on Kansas City to open the season. Close game. Look for Jason Elam's leg to win this one in the waning moments.

### Green Bay at Carolina

Ah, Monday Night Football and my Packers are in prime time in Week One. Life is good. It'll be even better when Green Bay wins. Believe it or not, Favero (who's name sounds strangely similar to Favre) and I both pick the Pack to win on the road.

So, there you have it sports fans! I disagree with my guest picker on NINE games ... in just one week! Week Two's picks will go on file with the editor of *Cav Country* (we disagreed on seven games), and we'll be sure to show you a running tally of just how smart, or how dumb, we turn out to be.

We're going to ask our journalists at each brigade to find a guest picker from the outlying areas of Baghdad, so if you're interested in getting in on this action, see your unit public affairs representative.

Until then, stay safe. Go Packers!

## Standings

MLB



As of August 11, 2004

### American League East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	72	41	.637	-
Boston	62	50	.554	9.5
Baltimore	54	58	.482	17.5
Tampa Bay	54	60	.474	18.5
Toronto	48	66	.421	24.5

### Central Division

Minnesota	62	51	.549	-
Cleveland	60	55	.522	3
Chicago Sox	56	55	.505	5
Detroit	52	61	.460	10
Kansas City	40	72	.357	21.5

### West Division

Oakland	64	49	.566	-
Anaheim	63	51	.553	1.5
Texas	61	51	.545	2.5
Seattle	43	70	.381	21

### National League East Division

Atlanta	64	48	.571	-
Philadelphia	59	55	.518	6
Florida	55	57	.491	9
New York	53	59	.473	11
Montreal	46	69	.411	18

### Central Division

St. Louis	74	38	.661	-
Chicago Cubs	62	51	.549	12.5
Houston	56	57	.496	18.5
Cincinnati	54	59	.478	20.5
Pittsburgh	53	58	.477	20.5
Milwaukee	53	59	.473	21

### West Division

Los Angeles	67	45	.598	-
San Diego	60	53	.531	7.5
San Francisco	60	55	.522	8.5
Colorado	51	63	.447	17
Arizona	35	80	.304	33.5

### Glossary:

W: Wins, L: Losses, PCT: Winning percentages, GB: Games Back